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Study Finds Racially Diverse Suburban Communities Growing Faster than White Suburbs but Resegregation Threatens Prosperity and Stability

JULY 18, 2012— Racially diverse suburbs are growing faster than white suburbs, but resegregation threatens their prosperity and stability, according to a study entitled, “America’s Racially Diverse Suburbs: Opportunities and Challenges,” released today by the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity at the University of Minnesota Law School.

Long perceived as predominantly prosperous white enclaves, suburbs are now at the cutting edge of racial, ethnic and political change in America. The study finds the number of racially diverse suburbs, municipalities ranging from 20-60 percent non-white, increased from 1,006 to 1,376 between 2000 and 2010 in the 50 largest U.S. metropolitan areas (a 37 percent increase). Fully 44 percent of suburban residents in these areas now live in racially diverse communities, up from 38 percent in 2000. Moreover, racially diverse suburbs are growing faster than white suburbs, and the number of diverse neighborhoods in suburbs is now more than twice the number found in central cities.

“Diverse suburbs represent some of the nation’s greatest hopes and its gravest challenges,” says study co-author Myron Orfield, director of the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity. “The rapidly growing diversity of suburban communities suggests a degree of declining racial bias and at least the partial success of fair housing laws. But the fragile demographic stability in these newly diverse suburbs presents serious challenges for local, state and federal governments.”

The study finds that racially diverse suburban communities have many attractive features, including relatively strong tax bases, low poverty rates, and strong local economies. They also are more walkable and energy efficient. According to Orfield, these findings are consistent with other research showing that diverse communities have higher graduation rates for minority students, better access to college and middle-income jobs, better race relations, greater civic engagement by all, and enhanced ability to cope with America’s increasingly diverse workplaces.

However, while representing great hope, these diverse suburbs face challenges, the most serious being resegregation. The study finds that many of these communities are in the midst of racial, social and economic transition, abetted by mortgage lending and insurance discrimination, subsidized housing placement, exclusionary zoning, and racial gerrymandering of school attendance boundaries.

The study proposes a number of public policy changes to help to stabilize diverse communities:

- Creation of local stable integration plans with fair housing ordinances, incentives for pro-integrative home loans, cooperative efforts with local school districts, and financial support of pro-integrative community-based organizations.
- Greater enforcement of existing civil rights laws including the Fair Housing Act, especially the sections related to racial steering, mortgage lending discrimination and location of publicly subsidized affordable housing.
- Adoption of regional strategies to limit exclusionary zoning and require affluent suburbs to accommodate their fair share of affordable housing.
- Adoption of metropolitan-scale strategies to promote more diverse schools.

“Resegregation is common but not inevitable,” says Orfield. “Stable integration is possible but it does not happen by accident. It is the product of clear race-conscious strategies, hard work, and political collaboration among local governments. Racially diverse communities represent the best model for the nation’s educational, economic and political success.”

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE ON METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY

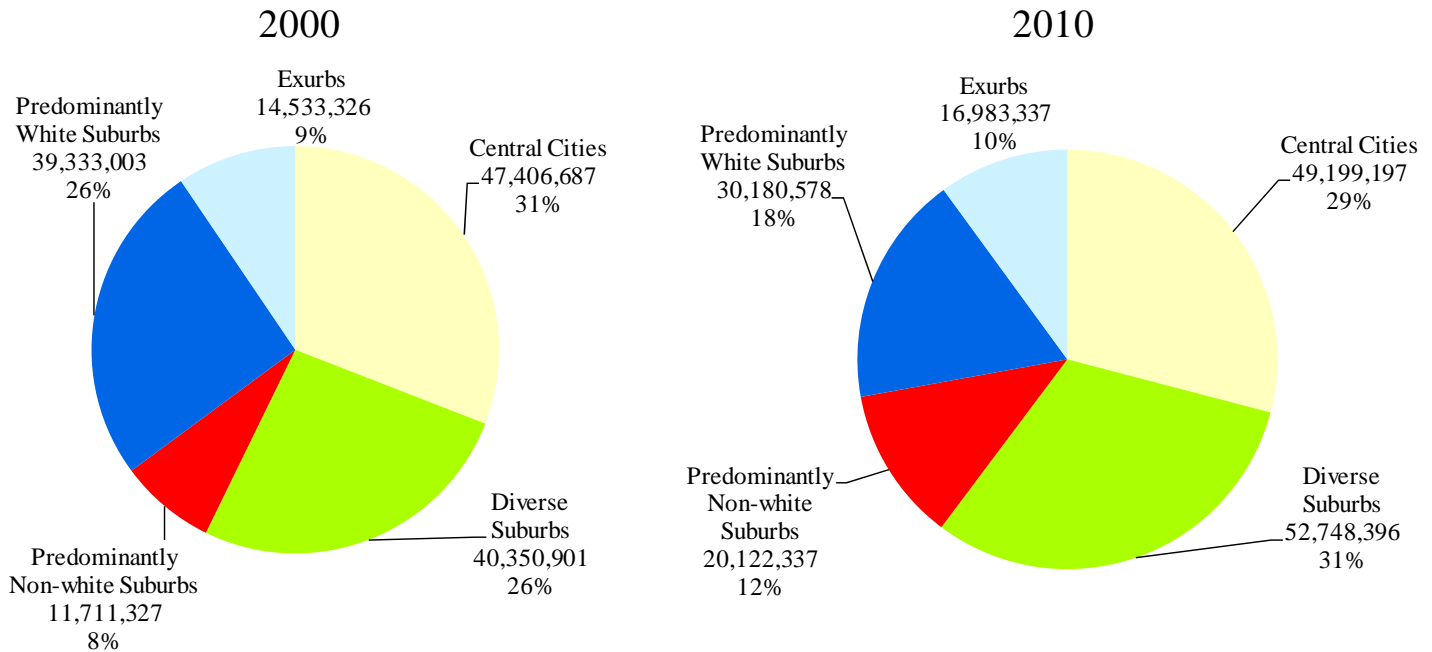
The Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity at the University of Minnesota Law School investigates the ways that laws, policies and practices affect development patterns in U.S. metropolitan regions. Through top-level scholarship, mapping, and advocacy, it provides the resources policymakers, planning officials and community organizations need to address reform in taxation, land use, housing, metropolitan governance and education. More information is available at <http://www.law.umn.edu/metro.html>.

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Last modified on July 5, 2012.

America's Racially Diverse Suburbs: Opportunities and Challenges

50 Largest U.S. Metropolitan Areas

Community types in the 50 largest metropolitan areas



Characteristics of the Community Types in the 50 largest metropolitan areas

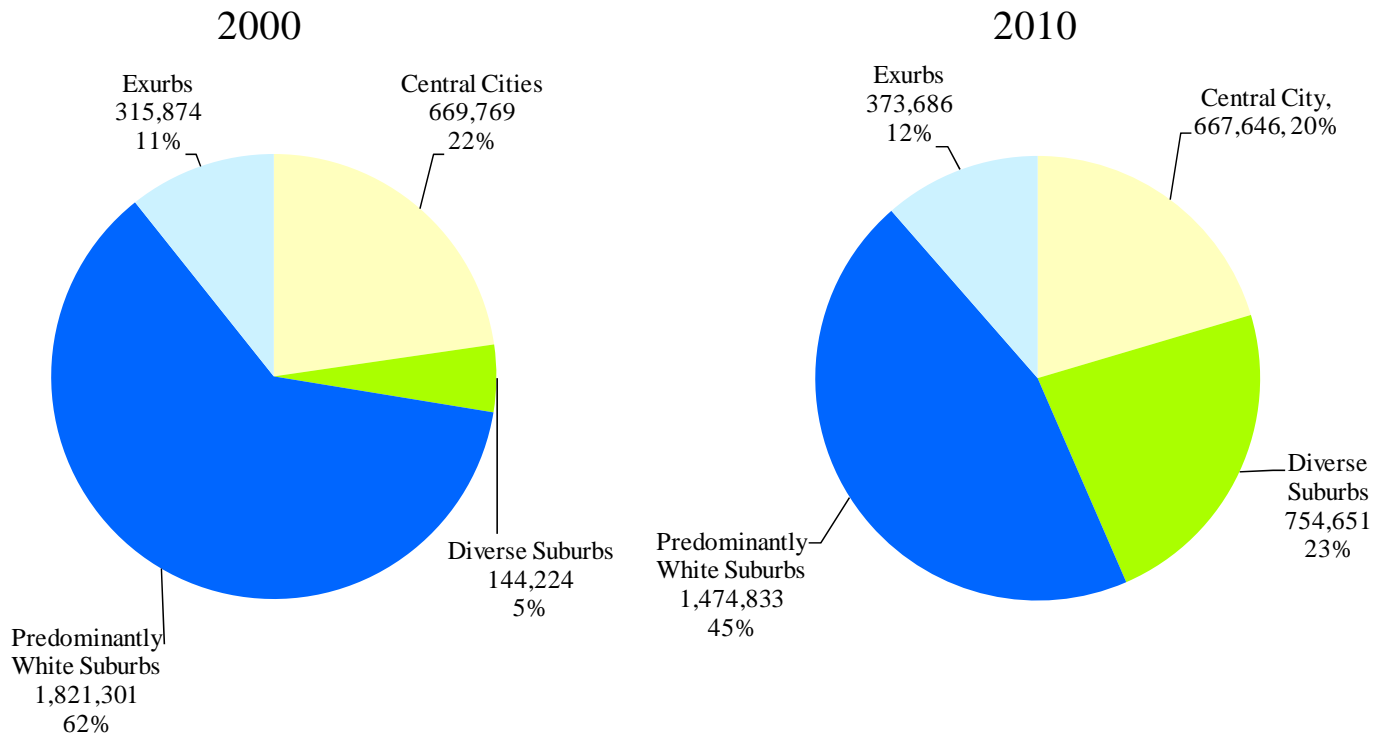


Data Sources: Population, income and poverty—Census Bureau; Jobs—Local Employer-Household Dynamics Program; Tax base—various state and local government sources.

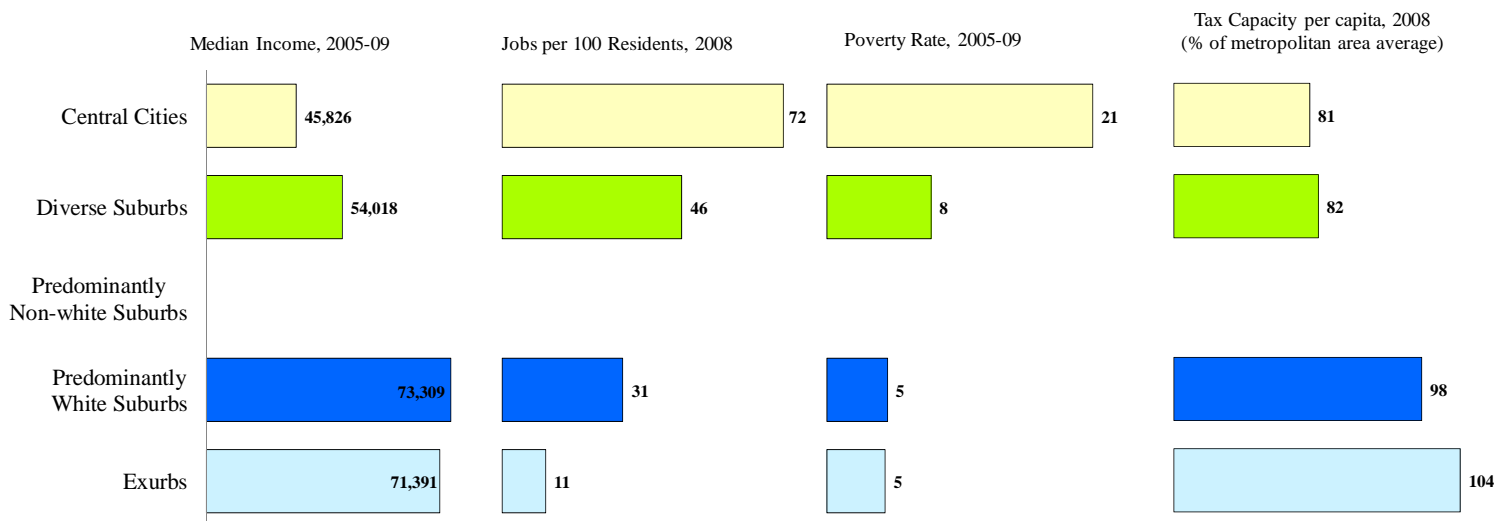
America's Racially Diverse Suburbs: Opportunities and Challenges

Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area

Community Types in Minneapolis-St. Paul



Characteristics of the Community Types in Minneapolis-St. Paul



Data Sources: Population, income and poverty—Census Bureau; Jobs—Local Employer-Household Dynamics Program; Tax base—various state and local government sources.

Minneapolis Metropolitan Area: Fact Sheet

Breakdown of Community Type

	2010 <u>Population</u>	Share of Metro <u>Population</u>	Share of Suburban <u>Population</u>
Diverse	754,651	23	29
Predominantly non-white	0	0	0
Predominantly white	1,474,833	45	57
Exurb	373,686	11	14
Central City	667,646	20	

Examples of Large Diverse Suburbs

	2000 <u>Population</u>	2010 <u>Population</u>	2010 % of Population <u>Non-white</u>
Bloomington city	85,172	82,893	23
Brooklyn Park city	67,388	75,781	50
Eagan city	63,557	64,206	21
Woodbury city	46,463	61,961	21
Burnsville city	60,220	60,306	26
Maplewood city	34,947	38,018	27
Shakopee city	20,568	37,076	26
Richfield city	34,439	35,228	37
Roseville city	33,690	33,660	21
Brooklyn Center city	29,172	30,104	54

Examples of Suburbs in Rapid Transition

	2000 % of Population <u>Non-white</u>	2010 % of Population <u>Non-white</u>	% Point <u>Change</u>
Brooklyn Center city	30	54	24
Columbia Heights city	14	35	21
Brooklyn Park city	30	50	20
Fridley city	12	28	16
Richfield city	21	37	16
Shakopee city	10	26	16
Maplewood city	12	27	15
New Hope city	15	29	14
West St. Paul city	17	30	13
Hopkins city	20	33	13
Robbinsdale city	12	25	13



